

Abstract

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COUNTRY : THAILAND

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INFO.

SUBJECT Economic and Political Information: Rumored
Conditions in USSR

DIST. 1 May 1947

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SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN

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1. An extensive purge is going on in the Soviet Far East, where thousands of people, especially seamen, railroad workers, and army personnel returned from Manchuria, have been placed under arrest.

2. Most of Marshal Malinovsky's staff officers have been deported for trial in Moscow, and the Marshal himself is in disfavor. Most of the settlers in the Kurile Islands - demobilized soldiers who had voluntarily accepted Kurile Island jobs on officially favorable terms - refused to work and requested return to the mainland because the hard conditions on the islands were far from the official rosy pictures given them previously. This "revolt" was quelled with severe casualties, and now compulsory labor has been dispatched to the islands.

Among the rumored causes of the reported critical unrest in the USSR is the failure of the first half year of the new Five Year Plan. It is said that this failure was brought about by the shortage of manpower and the sabotage activities of former war "heroes", who decline to work under the miserable conditions. Authorities became alarmed when it was discovered that a majority of the Communist members took sides with the demobilized workers. Millions of persons were arrested throughout the USSR and put in the compulsory labor brigade, in prison, or in concentration camps. Unrest is especially rampant in the western part of Russia, where conditions continued to be very bad after the war. The main grievance in this section is that women workers who were mobilized under the old war order are still being compelled to work under the new Five Year Plan.

4. It is said that people in the rural regions of the USSR are too undernourished and unhealthy generally for any hard work. Rehabilitation and reconstruction are extremely slow. Light industry, which, according to Stalin himself would meet the demand for essential food and goods, has failed in its task. Thousands of German experts have been assigned to these industries, and in the Russian zone of occupation in Germany most of the factories are working under orders of the USSR Ministry of Light Industries.
5. The regions of far east and west Siberia are in far better condition, as is the whole Ural area, where supplies of food and essential goods have been available, mostly from lend-lease stocks. However, in eastern Siberia, that region east and northeast of Irkutsk, (excluding Transbaikalia and the Amur River and the Ussuri River areas) living conditions are extremely bad. Here, compulsory labor (including German and Japanese POW's) is used almost exclusively.

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6. In Russia proper the situation is said to be deplorable. The mortality rate is little better than it was in 1920-1921. Medical service has been officially condemned as inadequate and amateurish. Thousands of doctors, mostly women, have been arrested, dismissed, or sentenced for incompetency or deliberate misuse of professional ability.

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